

THE Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

BRIEFS

NOBTS SETS INITIATIVE: ELECTS MISSISSIPPAN

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary will implement a multiethnic initiative designed to diversify the seminary community after trustees approved the plan April 12 at their spring meeting. The goal of Diverse Voices is an increase in minority representation in every layer of the seminary community among students, staff, and faculty, said seminary president Chuck Kelley during his address to trustees. Trustees also approved a \$23.4 million dollar budget and elected Bryant Barnes, pastor of First Church, Columbia, to serve another term as trustee vice-chair.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS SOUGHT

WASHINGTON (BP) — A coalition of over 150 groups, including the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), is pushing reforms in the justice system to foster rehabilitation and societal re-entry of prisoners. "There is no doubt that crime is a moral issue," ERLC President Russell Moore said. "Our response to crime, however, is no less a moral issue. It is precisely because the church cares about justice that followers of Jesus should work toward a criminal justice system that metes out judgment for the purpose of restoration and rehabilitation."

AFGHANIS SUFFERING UNDER ISIS ATTACKS

KABUL, Afghanistan (BP) — A suicide bomber who killed 57 Afghans, including 22 women and children, and injured at least 100 more in Kabul April 22 was targeting Shiite "apostates" at a voter registration center that was handing out credentials for the October election, the Islamic State said in claiming responsibility. In another attack in Kabul on March 21, an ISIS bomber killed 31 and injured 65 during Persian New Year celebrations. ISIS also killed hundreds in attacks on Shiite mosques and religious ceremonies in Kabul in August, September, and October of 2017.

Exec. Comm. secures crucial staffers

McGivney, Barker to begin MBCB service

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Editor

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee filled two important positions April 26 during a special called meeting at the Baptist Building in Jackson.

Shane McGivney, senior pastor of Yellow Leaf Church, Oxford, was tapped to lead the Men's Ministry Department. Greg Barker, pastor of Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale, was approved to serve as pastoral consultant in the Pastor/Leadership Development Department.

"Shane McGivney has been involved in every area of this work, simply serving and volunteering and being engaged," Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, told executive committee members.

"Greg Barker's responsibilities will be in the arena of minister of church relations and a sharp focus on how we can better meet the needs of and support nearly half of our pastors in Mississippi who are bivocational," Futral said.

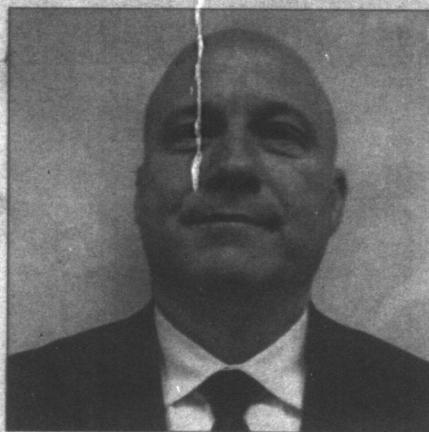
McGivney, age 47, holds doctor of ministry in church revitalization ('16) and master of divinity ('12) degrees from New Orleans Seminary. He also earned a bachelor of science in industrial technology degree ('92) from Mississippi State University in Starkville.

A native of Carthage, he has also served as senior pastor of Rocky Point Church, Carthage (2011-2016); senior pastor of New Hope Church, Carthage (2008-2011); and minister of music/associate pastor at Corinth Church, Carthage.

Prior to his call to ministry, he worked as a product engineer and as a manager at his family's tire business.

McGivney has been married for 24 years to Shelia Cook McGivney, an elementary school teacher. They have two children: Patrick, age 22, and Caitlin, age 17.

see STAFFERS on p. 5



McGIVNEY



BARKER

Pew: 25% of Christians do not buy biblical God

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — The good news is that 75% of self-identified Christians in America said in a recent Pew Research Center survey that they believe in an all-loving, omniscient, and omnipotent God as Scripture reveals.

The bad news: that leaves a fourth of self-identified Christians in this country who don't believe fully in the biblical description of God.

Pew Research Center is a Washington, D.C.-based, nonpartisan "fact tank" that informs the public about the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping the world, according to the organization's web site (pewresearch.org). The survey involved about 4,750 Americans, and was released April 25.

Eighty percent of Christians told Pew they believe in the biblical God, but not all of them believed in the three godly characteristics Pew identified. Other biblical characteristics of God, such as mercy and grace, were not specified in the study's questions.

Many of those who described themselves as Christians are confused about who God is and what qualifies a

see PEW on p. 7

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

It's still gossip

Dr. James Dobson, with Focus on the Family, pleads for our action. An organization has been granted a Federal Hearing by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in Washington, D.C. Their petition, #2493, would ultimately pave the way to stop the reading of the gospel of our Lord and Savior on the airwaves of America. They got 287,000 signatures to back their stand! If this attempt is successful, all Sunday worship services being broadcast on the radio or by television will be stopped. This group is also campaigning to remove all Christmas programs and Christmas carols from public schools! You, as a Christian, can help! We are praying for at least one million signatures.

This would defeat their effort and show that there are many Christians alive, well, and concerned about our country. As Christians, we must unite on this. Please don't take this lightly. We ignored one lady once and lost prayer in our schools and in offices across the nation. Please stand up for your religious freedom and let your voice be heard. Together we can make a difference in our country while creating an opportunity for the lost to know the Lord.

Please press "forward," clean up the message, and forward this to everyone you think should read this. Now, please sign your name at the bottom. Don't delete any other names, just go to the next number and type your name. Please do not sign jointly, such as Mr. & Mrs. each person should sign his/her own name.

Apparently, many thousands of people have received this breathless e-mail plea over the past several years. Problem is, it's not true.

The urban legend about petition 2493 has circulated with different types of pleas and 'calls for action' for many years. In fact, Focus on

INTERNET RUMORS — To investigate Internet rumors, first go to the web site of the individual or organization that is mentioned in the e-mail, such as James Dobson and Focus on the Family. The web sites of these individuals and organizations often have special sections devoted to rumors. Secondly, a number of web sites exist for the purpose of dispelling Internet rumors and hoaxes, including www.snopes.com and www.truthorfiction.com. (Note: The mention of particular web sites not controlled by The Baptist Record or the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board does not imply endorsement. Caution is recommended.)

the Family has recently learned of a version of the rumor that said that Dr. Dobson himself was asking for people to respond to the e-mail by signing a petition and circulating it to their friends and family. Please be assured that this is not true; Dr. Dobson did not initiate an e-mail petition, according to a statement Focus on the Family's official web site.

Unfortunately, the old Madalyn Murray O'Hair petition is making the rounds again, this time updated with James Dobson's name and zipped across the country at the effortless speed of e-mail. Christians, of all people, should not engage in such wasteful and ineffective activities as high tech gossip — and that's exactly what this is.

"Sadly, some Christians have embraced urban legends, developing a whole catalog of fables that are often used as affirmation of our faith in the Bible or to warn of a threat against religious liberties. The problem is that by uncritically forwarding some of these e-mails, we often violate the commandment against bearing false witness, and we hurt the church's credibility when we then try to preach a Gospel of truth," said Focus on the Family senior online editor Greg Hartman, in a past issue of Focus on the Family magazine.

Christians should not rush to believe, much less repeat, unsubstantiated gossip. After all, it is the glory of kings to search out a matter (Proverbs 25:2). As we damage our credibility, so do we damage our ability to witness to the ultimate truth of the Gospel.

E-mail is a powerful tool, but its ability to quickly, widely, and cheaply disseminate information is only as helpful as the information being spread. As stewards of truth for the rest of the world, Christians need to be judicious in their use of the forwarding button," Hartman said.

That's good advice. In the future, let's all check out such gossip before we promulgate it to others as truth. We'll all be better served.

Baptists' National Anthem

I had not been a Christian long when, in lighthearted fashion, the pastor of the church where my wife and I had been recently baptized as new believers asked the congregation to stand for the singing of the "Baptist National Anthem."

Wow! Baptist had their own national anthem! Who knew? I had absolutely no clue what was about to take place when we began to sing. The hymn? John Newton's immortal tune, Amazing Grace.

I've since realized that Amazing Grace might be considered somewhat of a national anthem in many denominations. Many other beloved hymns might be accorded this type of lofty status.

We never sang Amazing Grace in the church I grew up sporadically attending. I remember hearing folk-pop singer named Judy Collins sing it back in the early 1970s, but in a different style than we sang it that Sunday evening many years ago.

I've noticed something over the years that no matter the style in which you sing it, the message of God's amazing grace never loses its wonder.

When one considers all the adjectives Newton could have used to amplify the word grace, how amazing that he chose "amazing." What word better describes this miraculous, merciful, action by God on sinful man's behalf than the word amazing? The synonym for this word that comes closest to me is the word "astonishing" with "astounding" coming in a close second.

I like freebies and, no doubt, so do you. That is why, among other reasons, I am so astonished and astounded by grace. It costs me nothing though it cost God so much. Grace has made its recipients the owners of so many blessings over the course of their Christian lives. Beginning with the great salvation Jesus died on the cross to provide, how wonderfully the goodness of grace continues to enrich our lives, and to think it all comes as a freebie from the generous, giving hand of God.

I personally can identify with the Apostle Paul's description of where



Guest opinion
with Doug Metzger

salvation has brought us, as he spelled out in Ephesians, chapter two. I indeed was dead in my trespasses and sin, a man in rebellion against God and walking in step with the god of this world. I had allowed myself to become a child of wrath and worthy of condemnation.

As the son of parents involved in the liquor business, it became so easy for me as a teenager and then a college student to slip into the "eat, drink, and be merry" culture. As a young bachelor naval officer, I found a similar culture. I was totally bought in — hook, line, and sinker.

However, like Saul of Tarsus, God made me alive in Christ and turned my life around when by grace through faith He saved me. Thank God for that young enlisted man who was available that February night at the Naval Base in Little Creek, Va., when I found myself hungry to know what this thing called born-again Christianity was all about.

Thank God for that Naval Academy roommate who, when asked by me what made him so different from the rest of us, spoke of his committed Christian life being the result of being born again. Though his confession made no difference at the time, it bore fruit a decade later as it placed a seed in my life that God used to bring me to Himself.

A national anthem? No, but a hymn that, like none other, uplifts the greatest free gift ever given.

Metzger is a retired pastor living in Canton, Ga. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style, clarity, and length.

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BAPTISTS

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So. Baptist leaders alarmed over Calif. proposal

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — There's an old saying, "As goes California, so goes the rest of the country eventually." That may be why religious leaders across the U.S. are speaking out against a controversial piece of legislation being considered by California lawmakers.

Southern Baptists and other religious conservatives are warning that a bill currently making its way through the California State Legislature will violate free speech and religious freedom protections by prohibiting biblical teaching on sexuality.

The California Assembly — the lower house in the state legislature similar to the Mississippi House of Representatives — passed in a 50-18 vote April 19 an amendment that adds "sexual orientation change efforts" to the categories of activities barred by the state's consumer protection law.

The proposal, Assembly Bill (AB) 2943, still needs to gain approval in the Senate before it goes to Gov. Jerry Brown for his signature. Both houses of the California State Legislature are dominated by the Democratic Party, and the governor is a Democrat. Observers have said there's a strong possibility that AB 2943 will be rammed through by Democrats.

For, against?

The bill's supporters contend it targets only conversion therapy, also known as reparative therapy, where people practicing unconventional lifestyles may seek professional help to change their sexual outlook.

However, critics of the bill say the measure would affect much more than conversion therapy and would, in essence, make illegal any financial transaction involving a book, conference, or counseling that might help a person overcome undesired same sex attraction or gender confusion.

For example, buying tickets for a conference that deals with conversion therapy would be illegal, as would purchasing a workbook to be used at the conference. Likewise, a fee-based counseling effort involving conversion therapy would be against the law.

Moore: Rights erosion

Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, said the proposal "goes to the very foundations of free speech and religious liberty and is both reckless and harmful."

AB 2943 "essentially outlaws views of sexual ethics held by most Christians, Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and many others, all over the world and throughout history," Moore said in a written release. "If passed, it would have a chilling effect on religious institutions teaching their own beliefs, and would be a harm to all citizens, religious or not, by eroding basic First Amendment protections."

In an April 24 letter to Brown, Moore urged the governor to oppose and, if necessary, veto the bill. Despite their differences on many moral issues, Moore said he hoped the two of them "could agree on our constitutional heritage of freedom of speech and of religion."

Mohler in opposition

R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., took up the subject in the April 20 edition of his podcast, *The Briefing*.

"What we are facing here is the effort by the state... to make it virtually illegal for anyone to represent Orthodox Christian teaching on issues of gender and sex and sexual morality," Mohler told listeners, according to a podcast transcript.

The California Family Council (CFC), a partner organization of the California Southern Baptist Convention, decried the Assembly's passage of the legislation.

California "has no right to deny its residents the resources to help them find happiness or to shut down counselors, schools, and religious organizations that provide those services," said CFC Chief Executive Officer Jonathan Keller in a written statement.

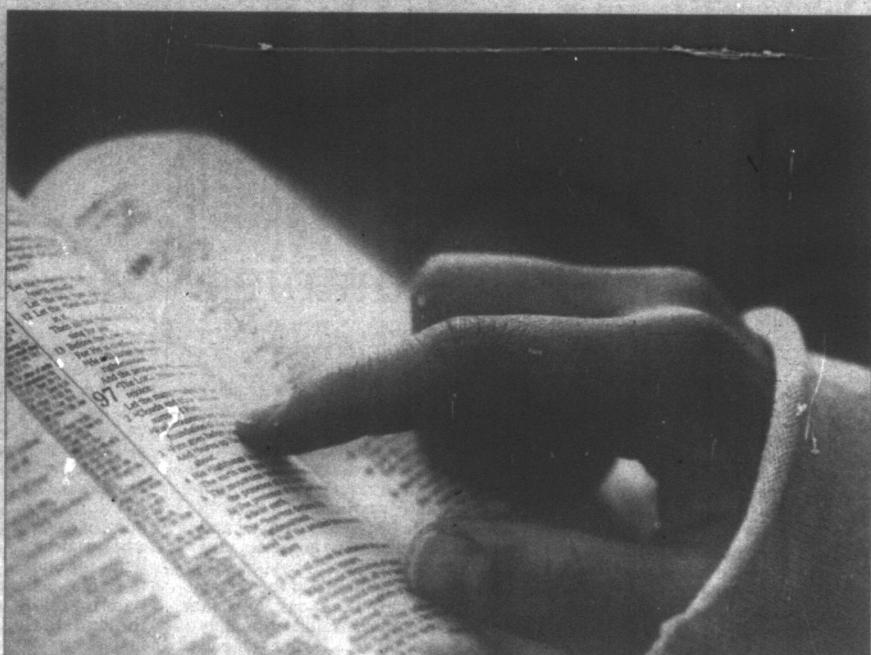
"Every person experiencing unwanted same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria must be allowed to pursue help in achieving their desired goals and outcomes," Keller said.

What's covered

The bill defines "sexual orientation change efforts" as "any practices that seek to change an individual's sexual orientation. This includes efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions, or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same sex."

Such efforts do not include psychotherapies that offer acceptance, support, and understanding of clients, and "do not seek to change sexual orientation."

Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) of Scottsdale,



The California Assembly passed an amendment April 19 that adds "sexual orientation change efforts" to the categories of activities barred by the state's consumer protection law. Southern Baptists warn that the bill will violate free speech and religious freedom protections by prohibiting biblical teaching on sexuality. (Photo by Pixel Creative/Shutterstock.com)

If passed, [AB 2943] would have a chilling effect on religious institutions teaching their own beliefs, and would be a harm to all citizens, religious or not, by eroding basic First Amendment protections.

Russell Moore
president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission

Az., a conservative watchdog group, in a March 8 legal analysis of AB 2943 said, "In other words, helping a person address unwanted attractions is banned, while helping someone embrace such attractions is permitted."

ADF, a legal organization that defends religious liberty, provided examples of the extent of the censorship if the proposal is enacted. Financial transactions in all these cases would trigger AB 2943, according to ADF.

A licensed counselor could not help a married mother of three who is experiencing unwanted sexual attraction to a close female friend or confusion over her gender identity overcome those feelings;

A religious ministry could not hold a conference on maintaining sexual purity if the conference encourages attendees to avoid homosexual behavior;

A bookstore (including online bookstores like Amazon) could not sell many recently published books challenging gender identity ideology and advocating that these beliefs should be rejected by society; and

A pastor paid to speak at an event addressing current social topics could not encourage attendees that they can prevail over same-sex desires or feelings that they were born the wrong sex.

The measure likely is unconstitutional not only because it discriminates based on viewpoint and impermissibly hinders free speech and religious exercise, it also infringes the First Amendment right to receive information, according to the ADF analysis.

Supporters celebrate

The Human Rights Campaign, the country's largest political organization advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights, and Equality California, a statewide LGBT group applauded the Assembly's passage of AB 2943.

"So-called conversion therapy is a dangerous, ineffective solution in search of a non-existent problem, and there's no place for it in the State of California," said Equality California executive director Rick Zbur in a written release.

"Once again, California legislators sent a clear, bipartisan message to the [LGBT] community across our state and around the world: You belong," Zbur said.

Call for veto

Conversion therapy has lost support among evangelicals in recent years, with many churches and pastors instead seeking to help people by teaching the Gospel of Jesus and its sufficiency.

In his letter to Brown, Moore commended the governor for his veto of a bill last year that would have prohibited religious organizations from disciplining employees who had abortions or participated in extramarital sex.

"You have spoken in the past of your deep commitment to the First Amendment, and to freedom of speech, even for those views with which you disagree," Moore wrote Brown. "I was, and am, grateful for your constitutional consistency on that matter."

William Perkins, editor of *The Baptist Record*, contributed to this report.

Recently I was visiting with one of our fine pastors. He began sharing with me a moment that had taken place in his life that was both eye-opening and soul-searching. He is a fine pastor serving a wonderful church, but just in the general process of life as it is with most of us, he was caught up in all of the needs and responsibilities, decisions and meetings, family, upcoming sermons, and on and on. The demands seemed to be coming rapidly and unendingly. All of a sudden, caught up in the swirl of needs and constant activities, there was a moment of, "What in the world is going on here?" Almost as soon as that thought washed across his soul, he was back in the thick of things, full-throated and warm-hearted and ready to tackle the world. With a sense of joy and exuberance, he told me, "It was almost like, you know, when you're driving down the road and you get too far to the side and those things that make the noise when you get off on the side of the road?" I said, "Sure." He said, "Well, that was kind of what it was like, and I just got back in my lane and where I was supposed to be." All was well.

Shortly after that, I ran across a friend of mine who is connected with the Mississippi Department of Transportation. I asked him, "What are those things called along the side of the road that are put there so that when you get over a little bit to the edge of the road, they start making your car vibrate and you hear this noise?" He knew exactly what I was talking about and said, "They're called rumble strips." How appropriate. How many, many times have I been driving down the road and gotten over on the rumble strips? They will get your attention and generally get you back in line.

I got to thinking about how many times that happens in life, not just on the highway but how God has worked in and around us to put His rumble strips along the lanes of our lives. I think you can even find rumble strips in the Bible.



Directions

With Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Rumble Strips of Life

Over in the book of Numbers in chapter 22, there is a prophet by the name of Balaam who received instructions from God not to go with the princes who had come to him and wanted him to put a curse on God's people. Balaam got up the next morning and got on his donkey and started riding, contrary to the will of God. It wouldn't be long until Balaam's life began to be pulled and pushed into what was going on, and the most amazing thing happened as God opened the mouth of the donkey. The donkey began to speak to Balaam. Balaam's response would ultimately be, "I have sinned; ...I will get me back again" (Num. 22:34). It seems as though in that twenty-second chapter of Numbers, God put down some rumble strips in Balaam's life and there was a wonderful wake-up moment as he came into a new understanding of the wonder of God's grace in his life.

Many of us have been there. Maybe we didn't hear the donkey talking clearly in our ears, but we have heard the rumblings of God's love urging us to get back into the center of His will. I can tell you that I have been down that road, and I can also tell you I have not met anybody who has not been there also. The wonderful thing about rumble

strips is that they are there night and day. They are not there to hurt us but to help us and remind us of where we're supposed to be. The folks in front of us and the folks behind us may also roll over the edge of the road and get into the rumble strips and they too are reminded: Get back over here.

I think about the rumble strip in the book of Acts, chapter nine. Maybe it's a better description to say a rumble light, for Saul of Tarsus is on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians there. He is angry. He's mad at the church. He's mad at God. He's mad at the Christians, and he's going to take care of them. On his way, you remember, he encountered a blinding light. A brilliant rumble strip showed up in his life, and he fell to the ground and suddenly met face-to-face with not only the brilliance but the wonder and blessing that would come from Jesus, his Lord to be. It's just a light, as in Numbers 22 it's just a donkey, but God can take the unusual things in your life and mine and just in seconds speak to us, point us in the right direction, and bless us.

The rumble strips of God are real in my life and yours. What a joy to realize that fact, and in hearing the rumble

strip noise know that God cares for us. One other time (there are dozens of instances in the Bible), one of His finest disciples heard a noise as recorded in the closing verses of the book of Matthew, chapter 26. Jesus had told Simon Peter that before the sun came up, before the cock began to crow, Peter would deny Him thrice. No, that would never happen, Peter protested. Peter was sure he would never fail his Savior. Others might fail Him, others might even abandon Him, but not Peter. It was after Peter said, "I do not know the Man," and began to curse and swear, that the cock crowed. The rooster rumble strip had arrived.

Peter heard the cock crowing, and the Bible says he remembered the words of Jesus. Verse 74 of that chapter says, "He went out and wept bitterly." Peter had gotten away from the closeness of Jesus. He had gotten caught up in the things that pulled him away in the world and there he was in that crowd and he heard the cock crow after everybody else had heard him say, "I do not know the Man." In just nanoseconds, his heart was pulled back to Jesus. God had placed there alongside his path the rooster rumble strip.

How many of us have been down the paths of life and maybe there's not a rooster that lives within a hundred miles of us, but God has a way of turning us, changing us, calling us, reminding us, loving us? It may not be a donkey or rooster. It may not be a bright light. It may be an illness or a song, a sermon or the love of a friend, or a stranger's kindness or an unexpected blessing that suddenly grabs us by the heart and says, "Get back in the lane and press on."

That would be the right moment for every one of us to stop and say, "Thank You, Lord, for the rumble strips You have put in my life. Keep me in the center of Your will."

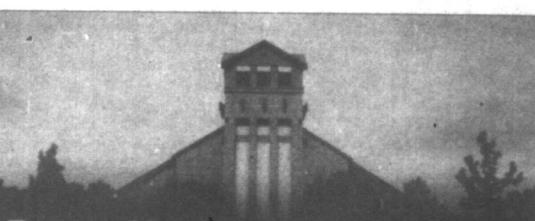
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Revivals & Homecomings

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► **Liberty Church, Noxapater:** Memorial Day, May 6; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; cemetery meeting, 10:30 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by food and fellowship.

► **Silver Creek Church, McComb:** May Day homecoming, May 6; services, 9:45 a.m. mu-

sic with Dogwood Cross; visiting and fellowship, 10:45 a.m.; worship followed by dinner on the grounds, 11 a.m.; Jeff Gardner, speaker.

► **New Sight Church, Brookhaven:** Homecoming, May 6; worship, 10:45 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Hampton Sims, speaker; Aaron and Amy Walker, worship leaders.

► **Crystal Ridge Church, Louisville:** Revival, May 6 - 9; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.;

Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Paul Blanchard, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver Family, music.

► **Academy Church, Blue Mountain:** Revival, May 6 - 9; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Tim Mims, speaker; special music nightly.

► **Salem Church, Kemper County:** Homecoming, May 6; services, 10:45 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds; Answered Prayer Gospel Band, music; Lee Hartley, pastor.

MS POSITIONS

PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST CHURCH IN BROOKHAVEN MS IS IN NEED OF PART TIME YOUTH MINISTER AND ALSO PART TIME MUSIC MINISTER. Contact Glenda at 601-786-3907.

EASTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH OF INDIANOLA IS RECEIVING RESUMES FOR A PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC. Resumes may be emailed to williebotts2971@gmail.com or mailed to Eastwood Baptist Church P.O. Box 466 Indianola, MS 38751 ATTN: Music Search Committee.

DREW BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR—Please email resume to drewbaptistchurch@gmail.com or U.S. mail to Drew Baptist Church, 139 S Church St., Drew, MS 38737.

HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH (SENA-TOBIA, MS) IS SEARCHING FOR A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC FOR A CONTEMPORARY SETTING. Submit resumes to Pastor@HBCSENATOBIA.COM

UNITY BAPTIST CHURCH, MOSELLE, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A FULL-TIME PASTOR. Please mail resumes to Unity Baptist Church, P.O. Box 156, Moselle, MS 39459. Or you may email them to ubc.resumes@yahoo.com Either should be designated as Attention: Pastor Search Committee.

BEULAH BAPTIST CHURCH-INNERS-NESS, MS IS SEEKING A PASTOR. Send resume to Beulah Baptist Church-P.O. Box 136, Inverness, Ms. 38753

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

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HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 3, 2018

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



— SENIOR ADULT DAY RETREATS —

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MAY 17
FBC, Vicksburg

MAY 22
FBC, Columbia

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Session 2: June 7-10
Session 3: June 12-15

Please contact Tony Martin at 601-292-3217 or tmartin@mbcb.org for further information.

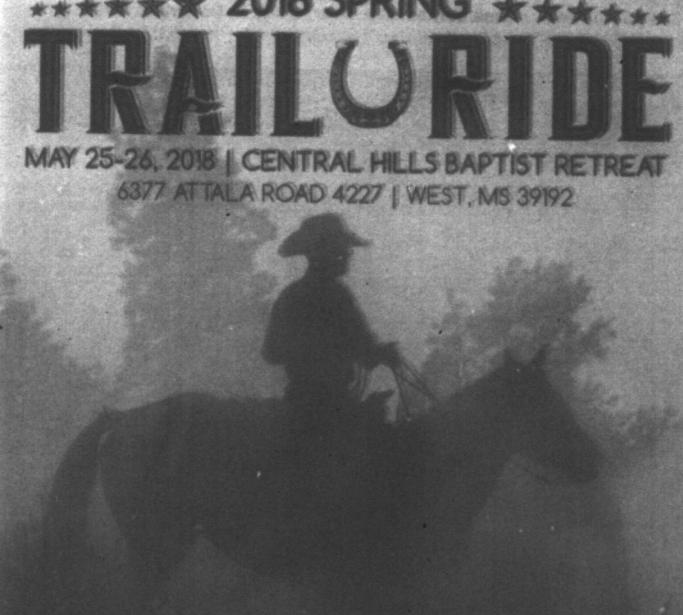
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MAY 14-15, 2018
NEW LOCATION
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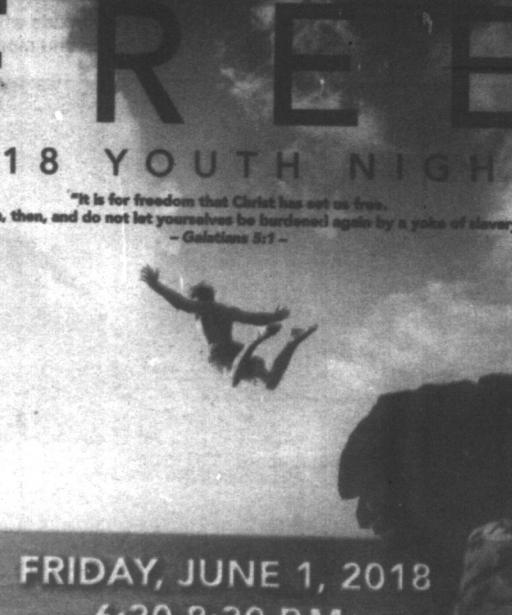


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F R E E
2018 YOUTH NIGHT

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.
Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."
— Galatians 5:1 —



FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 2018
6:30-8:30 P.M.
MISSISSIPPI COLISEUM, JACKSON

Speaker: JASON CURRY | Band: BROKEN VESSELS

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PLEASE CONTACT THE EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT AT 601-292-3278 OR LBURRIN@MBCB.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.

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CONFERENCE



JULY 26-28, 2018

HEBREWS 13:20-21

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If you would like to be certified in teaching English as a second language, tutoring children and youth, or adult reading and writing, this conference is for you. Additional training will be offered for certified tutors. Sponsored by WMUWMS. For more information, visit www.mccb.org/event/state-literacy-missions-training or contact Cindy Heimbach, State Literacy Missions Coordinator, at cindyheimbach@msn.com or 662-417-3944.



SMACK Camp

(Summer Music & Arts Camp for Kids)

July 10-14, 2018

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Blue Mountain, MS

Designed for kids who have completed 3rd-6th grades. Please contact the Church Music Department for registration forms and more information at 601-292-3267 or visit <http://www.mccb.org/church-growth/church-music>.



TOUR DATES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13 | 6:30 p.m.

First Baptist Church
900 High School Ave.
Kosciusko, MS 39090

SUNDAY, JUNE 17 | 4:15 p.m.

West Jackson Street Baptist Church
1320 West Jackson St.
Tupelo, MS 38801

THURSDAY, JUNE 14 | 6:30 p.m.

First Baptist Church
481 Goodyear Blvd.
Picayune, MS 39466

SUNDAY, JUNE 17 | 5:30 p.m.

Boden Baptist Church
4121 McCullough Blvd.
Boden, MS 38826

FRIDAY, JUNE 15 | 6:30 p.m.

Clarke-Venable Baptist Church
362 West Broad St.
Decatur, MS 39327

MONDAY, JUNE 18 | 6:30 p.m.

First Baptist Church
431 North State St.
Jackson, MS 39201

SATURDAY, JUNE 16 | 6:00 p.m.

Calvary Baptist Church
282 McCord St.
West Point, MS 39773

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Pray this day for...

May 4 - May 17, 2018

*"praying at all times in the Spirit...To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."
Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)*

Pray for: Guy De-Mare, missionary ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through hospitality coordination.

Pray for: Jeffery & Liessa Holleman, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: Aaron & Tiffany Biggs, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through general evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: Ronald & Beverly Holmes, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: Sheila Flowers, missionary ministering to European Peoples through administration.

Pray for: Daniel & Claudia Hood, missionaries ministering to Northern African & Middle Eastern Peoples through general evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.

Pray for: Millard Jones, missionary ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: Kenneth & Kimberly Hatchcock, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: Susan Jones, missionary ministering to East Asian Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: Rebekah Clark, missionary ministering to European Peoples through youth evangelism.

Pray for: Cindy Dillars, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: Cynthia Hodges, missionary ministering to Deaf Peoples through church/home outreach evangelism.



Mr. Benjamin Worthy
07/18/08
Charlie & Shannon Worthy
European Peoples



To Be Sent June 22, 2018, by the WMU Office

PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING: Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending Birthday cards! Because of the mailing to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Record, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is posted two months ahead to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthday. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!

NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.

FOR SECURITY: cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MBCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205. Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.



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Make an eternal investment with your
2018 VBS Missions Offering.

Missions Mobilization of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board invites you to participate in the Home Building Project in Malaysia. For the 8th year in a row, we are collecting VBS offerings to build longhouses in Malaysia. Please consider setting a goal for your VBS to collect \$1,400 to provide a home for a family in Malaysia. The offerings received will purchase the building materials. Missions Mobilization will send the volunteer construction teams to provide the labor, alongside the Malaysian families. In the past six years 608 decisions have been made for Christ and 371 homes have been built.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/MSLonghouse> for pronto materials.
Contact Missions Mobilization at 601-292-3398 or
cmunn@mbcb.org for more information.



HeartSong Music Youth Camp
(6th-12th Graders)

June 26-30, 2018

Southwest Mississippi Community College
Summit, MS

Please contact Church Music for registration forms
and more info at 601-292-3267 or visit
<http://www.mbcb.org/church-growth/church-music>



Contact our Mission Strategy Department at 601-292-3231 or
e-mail bbridges@mbcb.org for more information.

HOUSE TOPS

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Southwestern Seminary's Patterson walks back domestic abuse comments

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP and local reports) — Southwestern Seminary President Paige Patterson is clarifying his view on domestic violence and voicing regret "that the way I expressed that conviction has brought hurt," in reference to an

18-year-old audio tape on which he said the proper response of a wife to domestic abuse "depends on the level of abuse to some degree."

In the audio clip at issue, Patterson was asked his counsel to women "who are undergoing genuine physical abuse from their husbands."

Patterson replied in part, "It depends on the level of abuse to some degree. I have never in my ministry counseled that anybody seek a divorce, and I do think that's always wrong counsel. There have been, however, an occasion or two when the level of abuse was serious enough, dangerous enough, immoral enough that I have counseled temporary separation and the seeking of help. I would urge you to understand that that should happen only in the most serious of cases."

Amid increasing discussion of his comments on social media, Patterson issued a written statement April 29 that said, "For the

record, I have never been abusive to any woman. I have never counseled or condoned abuse of any kind. I will never be a party to any position other than that of the defense of any weaker party when subjected to the threat of a stronger party. This certainly includes women and children. Any physical or sexual abuse of anyone should be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities, as I have always done."

"I have also said that I have never recommended or prescribed divorce. How could I as a minister of the Gospel? The Bible makes clear the way in which God views divorce. I have on more than one occasion counseled and aided women in leaving an abusive husband. So much is this the case that on an occasion during my New Orleans pastorate, my own life was threatened by an abusive husband because I counseled his wife, and assisted her, in departing their home to seek protection. In short, I have no sympathies at all for cowardly acts of abuse toward women."

In an interview with Baptist Press, Patterson said he doubts "seriously" that a person of either gender experiencing physical abuse ever would be morally obligated to remain in the home with their spouse. Yet, he said, "minor physical abuse which happens in so many marriages" and which does not make the wife fear for

her safety might spur a woman to "pray [her husband] through this" rather than leave.

"Am I going to tell a woman like that she is wrong to take the matter to God?" Patterson asked. "I don't think so."

The audio tape was posted April 28 on a blog that has been critical of Patterson. Information from that blog was tweeted the same day by a writer for Religion News Service. Amid the ensuing social media firestorm, The Washington Post reported on Patterson's April 29 statement.

The Post reported that according to the author of the blog, who wished to remain anonymous, Patterson was being interviewed by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, an evangelical organization with close ties to the Southern Baptist Convention that endorses Bible-based roles for men and women.

The Council is headquartered in Louisville, Ky. Denny Burk, president of group, is professor of Biblical Studies at Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Seminary in Louisville.

"Efforts to confirm that with the council late Sunday [April 29] were not successful," the Post article said.

William Perkins, editor of The Baptist Record, contributed to this report.

sissippi Baptist, for the fields are white unto harvest!"

Greg Barker, age 58, was born in Panama City, FL, and graduated from d'Iberville High School in Biloxi. He attended Baptist-affiliated William Carey University in Hattiesburg and Florida Baptist Theological College in Graceville, FL. Barker holds degrees in pastoral ministries, biblical studies, and Christian education from New Orleans Seminary.

He was licensed to the Gospel ministry in April 1981 and ordained in October 1987, both at Emmanuel Church, Ocean Springs. He holds certifications as a Master Life Facilitator, and

in Christian Witness Training (CWT) and F.A.L.T.H. training. Barker has served as:

- Volunteer youth minister at Emmanuel Church, Ocean Springs (1981-1987).

- Pastor of East Salem Church, Leakesville (1987-1990).

- Pastor of New Sharon Church, Husser, La. (1990-1995).

- Senior pastor of Haynes Avenue Church, Shreveport, La. (1995-2001).

- Senior pastor of Fayette Church, Fayette, Al. (2001-2006).

- Rocky Creek Church, Lutcher (2006-2018).

At the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Barker has served on the 100-member board as well as the disaster relief and bivocational committees.

Barker has been married for 36 years to Kathy Lynn Odom Barker. They have four adult, married children: Hope, Heather, Heath, and Caleb, and five grandchildren.

"Psalm 37:4-5 tells us to 'Take delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.' I am truly delighted about this opportunity to serve the pastors and churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. If there is any need I can help you with, please do not hesitate to call. My door is always open," Barker told The Baptist Record.

Both men will begin their new duties on May 14.

STAFFERS

cont. from p. 1

The Men's Ministry Department includes the ministries of disaster relief, prisons, chaplaincy, and camps.

"I am humbled to be asked to serve my Savior and Mississippi Baptists in the role as director of men's ministry and disaster relief," McGivney told The Baptist Record. "I am saddened to have to leave the pastorate but also excited about the opportunity to be a part of leading Mississippi Baptist men and women to make disciples of Jesus Christ."

"What a great time to be a Mis-



**EVANGELIST
CHRIS
BROADHEAD**

601.550.9565
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Evangelist Chris Broadhead is available for revivals, pulpit supply, or in any direction in which the Lord may lead. Bro. Broadhead is an evangelist who is committed to traditional, Holy Ghost, Bible based preaching and the conservative views of the Baptist doctrine. Bro. Broadhead is a member of Magnolia Baptist Church and is pursuing his degree in church ministries. He is married and resides in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He can be contacted by phone, text, or email at: 601.550.9565 or chrisbroadhead5714@gmail.com

SIDEWALK PROPHETS

in Concert

May 24, 2018 7:00 p.m. ▶

Leflore County Civic Center

200 Hwy 7 North, Greenwood, MS 38930

Purchase tickets at event bright.com or

NORTH GREENWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

615 Grand Boulevard, Greenwood, MS 38930 - 662-453-2801

\$10 General Admission

OBITUARIES

William Gray (Bro. Bill) Dowdy, 85, long-time Mississippi Baptist pastor, passed away April 16. A 22-year veteran of the U.S. Army and the Mississippi Army National Guard, Dowdy was a retired Baptist minister having pastored Tocophero, Liberty, Mt. Olive, Furr, Gaston, White Oak, Cliff Temple, Concord, Faith, and Cairo churches in Mississippi. Dowdy grew up in Pontotoc County and was the oldest of eight children. He was preceded in death by his parents, Lavell and Lucille Dowdy; infant children Mary Elizabeth and David Garner; and daughter-in-law Vicki. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Fannie Garner Dowdy; children Billy (Lynette) Dowdy of Laurel, Darlene (Larry) Clark of Olive Branch, Pam (Jeff) Hobby of Madison, and Tim Dowdy of Ridgeland; 10 grandchildren; and 14 great grandchildren. Funeral service was April 19 at West Heights Church, Pontotoc, with burial in Echu City Cemetery. Tutor Memorial Funeral Home of Pontotoc was in charge of arrangements.

John Willis Flowers, 94, long-time Mississippi Baptist pastor, passed away April 12 at Senatobia Healthcare and Rehab in Senatobia. He was born November 29, 1923, in Magnolia, to Harmon S. and Annie Roe Flowers, and grew up near McComb. He joined the U.S. Army in 1942 and served in the European Theater during World War II. Flowers earned a bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College in Clinton, and bachelor of divinity, master of religious education, and doctorate of religious education degrees from New Orleans Seminary. Flowers was ordained at Navilla Church, McComb, on July 7, 1947, and went on to serve as pastor of Shady Grove Church, Lincoln Association; associate pastor of First Church, McComb; and pastor of First Church, Senatobia. He led First Church, Senatobia, for 33 years, retired in 1992, and was named pastor emeritus.



FLOWERS

Flowers served on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and was a member of the Historical Society of Mississippi Baptists. He also taught Bible, ethics, and world religions, among other courses, at Northwest Mississippi Community College in Senatobia. He was preceded in death by his parents and an infant son, Philip Murrell Flowers. He is survived by his wife, Jessie B. Flowers of Senatobia; daughters Becky Wallace (Charles) of Brandon, Rachel Roberts (Steven) of Cordova, Tenn., and Ruth Patch of Rutland, Mass.; sisters Donnis Mae Kahl of Natchez, and Melba Pine of Dayton, Ohio; six grandchildren; and four great grandchildren. Funeral service was held April 15 at First Church, Senatobia, with burial in Bethesda Cemetery, Senatobia. Pate-Jones Funeral Home in Senatobia was in charge of arrangements.

David D. Holt, 79, long-time Mississippi Baptist pastor, passed away April 22 at his home in Morton. Holt, a native of Lake, had lived in Morton for the past thirty-five years after moving from Jackson. He started his ministry at McDowell Road Church in Jackson, then pastored in Neshoba County, Newton County, and Natchez, and ended his ministry at Parkway Church in Morton where he was a member. He was active in prison ministry and campground ministry at Roosevelt State Park. Holt was preceded in death by his parents, Jessie French and Mattie Jane Mowdy Holt; daughter, Kimberly Laura Holt; brothers J.C. James and Willie Frank Holt; sisters Belle Holt Manton and Opal J. Holt Armstrong. He is survived by his wife of fifty-eight years, Jean Westbrook Holt of Morton; son Jeff Holt (Regina) of McComb; daughter Teresa Moore (Reese) of Flowood; sisters, Kate Mathis of Clinton, and Betty Moudy of Morton; five grandchildren; and six great grandchildren. Funeral service was held April 25 at Parkway Church in Morton, with interment at the Lakewood Memorial Park in Clinton. Wolf Funeral Services in Morton was in charge of the arrangements.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcc.org.

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GU MHR QMH LMAY HWE ELY IBGCGE

WU VLCGIE, LY GI HWHY WU LGI.

CWQMHI YGKLE: HGHY

Clue: N = B

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John 4:24

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Displaying the Gospel • 2 Corinthians 4:5-18

I'm sure you remember childhood days, when teams were being chosen. Two leaders would stand and take turns calling out names of the kids gathered. The strongest, tallest, and fastest were chosen before the ones with less-desirable physical abilities were selected. And of course, the leaders chose the "best" first because they knew having a top-notch team would enhance their chances of winning whatever game was to be played.

Before getting too far into his earthly ministry, Jesus assembled His team of core followers. This was such an important undertaking, he spent all night in prayer before calling out the names of his chosen disciples (Luke 6:12-13). Since this was such a crucial spiritual mission, did Jesus choose only those possessing a high quality of moral fiber, a loving and sacrificial demeanor, or a brilliant education? Hardly. As we follow the Lord's brief years with these men, we see instances of their being fearful (Matthew 8:25), lacking faith (Luke 9:40-41), displaying pride and an argumentative spirit (Mark 9:33), being judgmental (Luke 9:52-56), brushing aside little children (Luke 18:15), and deserting their Lord at the time of his arrest (Mark 14:50). Yet we see, even with all their ignoble characteristics, Jesus entrusted these weak vessels with proclaiming his message.

He "gave them power and authority to drive out demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God..." (Luke 9:1-2 NIV).

So what can we glean from considering the lives and examples of these fallible called-out ones? One thing is that the mission isn't about us at all. "For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." Paul reminds us in the opening verse of this week's focal passage (2 Corinthians 4:5 NKJV).

A glorious testimony or impeccable character isn't required to draw others to the Savior; instead, it is the light of God's grace, shining on the sinful heart that brings "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

This, of course, is not to dismiss the value of a godly life or a life-changing story of God's grace that the Lord can use to touch hearts. Jesus himself told his followers to be salt and light to a lost humanity, "that they may see your good deeds and praise

your Father in heaven" (Matthew 6:13-16 NIV). But we can be so grateful that the Holy Spirit can use each of us who claim him as King, even when we fumble the faithfulness ball on a regular basis. Paul nails this case when he says we "have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:6 NKJV).

Not only are we weak because of failings of our own, but also due to pressures and trials brought on by those wishing to thwart our mission. In verses 8-9,

Paul uses the words "hard-pressed," "perplexed," "persecuted," and "struck

down" to describe such experiences. But he adds that instead of waving the white flag, looking to Christ for strength and deliverance brought him victory. Paul's intense sufferings called him again and again to die to self "that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in [his] body." (See also Galatians 2:20.) Jesus also emphasized this death-bringing-life process: "Most assur-

edly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24 NKJV).

Paul knew his trials would benefit the Corinth believers (2 Corinthians 4:15). This thought encouraged him as he faced new tests of faith. Though his physical capacity was often depleted, the Lord strengthened his inner man; it was "renewed day by day" (vs. 16). He considered his afflictions both light and temporary, and actually embraced them, knowing his gospel labors would produce an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (vs. 17). His focus was on the "eternal", not the "temporary" (vs. 18).

Joni Eareckson Tada says, "When life is rosy, we may slide by with knowing about Jesus, with imitating him and quoting him and speaking of him. But only in suffering will we know Jesus." Paul desired this: to experience "the fellowship of sharing in [Christ's] sufferings" (Philippians 3:10). As Christians, we often keep our beliefs to ourselves to avoid possible confrontation and persecution. Doing so deprives us of a deeper, more intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus than we'd otherwise know.

Maniscalco is a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ocean Springs.

Stand Down • Esther 4:1-3, 10-16

Standing up for the sake of others can sometimes be easy: casting a vote, writing a check, or sending an email and making an appeal. Such actions are good, but they require little from us. Sometimes, though, taking a stand doesn't sit well in the eyes of family, employers, or the community. When it is costly, what do we do? Esther faced just such a decision, yet she was willing to set aside her own self-preservation to see that justice was done.

Esther 4:1-3 — Grieve injustice and cry out to God.

Esther, Mordecai, and the rest of the Jews were facing a real ordeal. King Ahasuerus had sent letters to all of the royal provinces stating that all the Jewish people – young and old, women and children – were to be destroyed, killed, and annihilated, and their possessions plundered (3:13). Mordecai's response was what you'd expect – he tore his clothes and wept loudly and bitterly. Mordecai didn't get the king's attention, but he did get Esther's. It isn't stated that the people responded in prayer, but the implication in verse 3 is that through fasting, weeping, and lamenting, prayer was taking place. The people were, at the very least, seeking God.

How would you have responded? Is there an evil or injustice in the world today that would draw such a reaction from you? In the case here, you see Mordecai and the Jews begging that God intervene. It may well be that we, faced with the dire condition of our world, might find a way to influence people with the hope of the gospel.

Esther 4:10-14 — Look for God's hand in where He has placed you.

Mordecai wanted to speak to the king. Esther replied to him through the trusted eunuch Hethach that to come to the king without an invitation

would mean that Mordecai would be executed. The Persian Empire had a long history of political assassinations – Ahasuerus himself escaped being killed earlier – so it's understandable why the rulers of the period had to protect themselves. The one exception would be if the

king was approached by someone and he extended a gold scepter to his visitor.

Mordecai encouraged Esther to approach the king anyway – she wasn't exempt from the same law everyone else was under. Esther was risking her life. But if she had remained silent, she probably would have been executed, since many of her servants knew of her connection to Mordecai, who was a Jew himself.

Mordecai encourages Esther in verse 14. He challenged her with the thought that God had a purpose in placing her in such a strategic position. His words might have given Esther the strength she needed to risk her life

for her people. Mordecai believed that God was going ultimately to bring deliverance to God's people. He challenged her with a classic thought – had she come into her position in the kingdom for this sole reason? Had she become queen of Persia "for such a time as this?" It's well to con-

sider Mordecai's trust in God from his charge to Esther.

Esther 4:15-16 — Trust God and surrender yourself to God's work.

In times of crisis, God's people have often fasted and prayed, seeking His mercy, help, and deliverance. This fast Esther calls the people to was unusually long, and she put herself and her household under the same constraints.

Esther's comment in v. 16 – "If I perish, I perish" – is not her saying "I give up. There's nothing I can do." Rather, it's evidence of her total dependence on God to see her and her people through the upcoming ordeal. It is a statement of trust in God and a surrender to Him to have His own way.

It may well be that this story can encourage us to see God's hand in our lives. God is in control. That should give direction to our lives and strengthen our faith. We are called to be people of faith. God has placed you where you are for a reason, no matter how unclear that reason might be right now. There may be areas of influence, however small, in which God wants to use you. Don't miss out on what God wants to do through you.

Martin is Associate Editor of The Baptist Record.

PEW

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person as Christian, said R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in the April 26 edition of his podcast, *The Briefing*.

"Here we are being told that a significant number of those who identify as Christians say that they don't believe in the God of the Bible," Mohler said. "Some

of them, even if just one percent, when we're talking about the numbers involved here, say that they are Christians, but they don't believe in any higher power at all.

"It means, by the way, that not only are they not Christians, they're not even theists," Mohler said of self-described Christians who don't even believe in a higher power.

Most Christians (93%) believe "God or another higher power

in the universe" loves all people regardless of their faults, 87% believe God is omniscient or all-knowing, and 78% believe God is omnipotent or all-powerful.

The 75% of Christians who said they believe in all three of the identified characteristics of the biblical God was higher than the total found in the greater population, 56 percent of which reported such a belief.

In all, 90% of Americans believe in a higher power or spiritual force in the universe.

essarily described as the biblical God. Among other findings:

■ 91% of black Protestants and 87% of white evangelicals believe God has all three traits, compared to 62% of mainline Protestants and 61% of Catholics.

■ 56% of Jews and 53% of religiously-unaffiliated "nones" told Pew they don't believe in the biblical God but do believe in a higher power or spiritual force in the universe.

■ 75% of American adults, including Christians and the general population, say they try to talk to God, but not all of them consider the conversations the same as prayer.

■ 39% of Americans who said they never or seldom pray said they talk to God just the same.

■ Three percent of agnostics say they believe in the biblical God.

The full study is available at pewforum.org.

Just for the Record



CENTER HILL CHURCH, MONROE ASSOCIATION, sponsored Ethan Foster, church member and college student, on the Itawamba Community College BSU mission trip to Alaska. Shown is Foster and pastor Terry Edwards.



LINCOLN ASSOCIATION honored Peck Vaughn and Edna Haley as Missions Leader Emeriti for their years of service in Baptist Men and WMU. They are shown with their pastors, Garland Boyd and Willie Welch.



PLEASANT HILL CHURCH, LINCOLN ASSOCIATION, held its 14th annual soup luncheon Jan. 25. Dogwood Cross, music; Jim Futral, speaker. The group presented Dr. Futral with a hand-made quilt.



Jerry Pope, a member of **CENTRAL CHURCH, MERIDIAN**, distributed toiletries to tornado victims.



CALVARY CHURCH, VICKSBURG, hosted an Easter egg hunt.

Bible Drills



FRIENDSHIP CHURCH, GRENADA, recognizes its student, children, and Bible Buddies drillers.



NEW LIBERTY CHURCH, MORTON, recognizes its drillers who competed in associational drills. Shown are Aleyna Ivy, McKenzie Richards, Lillie Bradshaw, Sam Bradshaw, and Irby Rawson.



ROCKY CREEK CHURCH, LUCEDALE, recognizes its Youth and Children's Bible Drill participants. (Front Row left to right) Maggie Ferguson, Keely Havard, Emma Croom, Michael Reynolds, Samuel O'Neal. (Back Row left to right) Gabriel Ferguson, Arayna O'Neal, Houston Herrington, Will Havard, Jase Mathis, Gage Cowart.



CALVARY CHURCH, WAYNESBORO, recognizes its children's drillers Carter Cochran and Jayden Hall.